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ABSTRACT

In late 1980, a study was conducted at Miami-Dade Community College (MDCC) to determine how well the college was meeting the needs of its academically superior students. Questionnaires were sent to four groups of students enrolled in fall 1979: Scholar's Grant students, who ranked in the top 10% of their graduating high school class; Phi Theta Kappa students, who had a grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 or more; a non-affiliated group of academically excellent students with a GPA of 3.0 or more; and a comparison group of students with GPA's between 2.0 and 2.5. The 150-item Student Reaction to College questionnaire was used to obtain student views on instruction, counseling and advising, administrative regulations, study habits, student goals and activities, living arrangements, and college services and activities. Selected findings were based on responses from 283 (69.9%) of the Scholar's Grant recipients, 71 (79.7%) of the Phi Theta Kappa students, 444 (64%) of the non-affiliated students, and 173 (55.8%) of the comparison group. Findings included the following: (1) the academically excellent groups contained much higher proportions of female students than the comparison group; and (2) in contrast to the comparison group, the academically excellent groups more frequently felt that instructors had geared courses to student interest and ability, felt more favorably toward credit by examination and separate classes for the best and slower students, and placed more value on grades. (HB)

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STUDENT REACTIONS TO COLLEGE

Research Report No. 82-09

April 1982

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Miami-Dade Community College

OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH

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INTRODUCTION

Beginning with the Fall Term of 1979-80, Miami-Dade Community College established the Emphasis on Excellence program in an attempt to attract more academically superior students to the College. The program includes such features as a Distinguished Visiting Professor series, cultural activities, invitational seminars, and an acceleration program enabling students to complete two years of college in less time. In addition, the College offers honors level courses and merit awards for academic performance. One of these awards, the High School Achievement Award (formerly known as the Scholar's Grant), is available to Dade County high school graduates who rank in the top ten percent of their graduating class.

As the first group of Scholar's Grant recipients completed one full year at the College, the following question was raised: How well were the educational needs of these students met during their first year at Miami-Dade, and in general, how well does Miami-Dade meet the needs of its academically superior students?

To answer this question, the campus coordinators for Emphasis on Excellence decided to conduct a survey of the academically superior students at Miami-Dade with the assistance of the Office of Institutional Research. The questionnaire chosen for the survey was developed by Educational Testing Services (ETS, 1973) and is known as Student Reactions to College (SRC). The SRC is a 150-item questionnaire intended for students who have completed at least one semester of college and is

designed to give students an opportunity to express their opinions about the many aspects of college experiences, e.g. instruction, counseling, administrative affairs, and out-of-class activities.

The survey was directed to three groups of academically excellent students - (Group 1) Students who were the original Scholar's Grant recipients and who re-enrolled for the 80-1 Term; (Group 2) Students who enrolled at Miami-Dade in Term 79-1 and became members of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society; and (Group 3) Students who enrolled at Miami-Dade in Term 79-1 and had a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.00 or better but were not affiliated with the scholarship or honor society groups. In this way, the separate influence of organized scholarship activities could be analyzed (Groups 1 and 2) as well as the general atmosphere provided for academically excellent students (Group 3). A comparison group of "average" students who enrolled at Miami-Dade in Term 79-1 and earned GPA's between 2.00 and 2.50 was also assessed.

The SRC consists of ten content areas into which the items may be categorized. These are: (1) instruction and classroom experience, (2) studying, (3) student goals and planning, (4) counseling and advising, (5) administrative regulations, (6) class scheduling and registration, (7) student activities, (8) living, (9) faculty contact, and (10) library bookstore. The survey also allows for the inclusion of additional items of special interest to the college conducting the study. This section of SRC is referred to as the "local options" section.

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In order to address each of the ten content areas, as well as the local options section, the results of the SRC are presented in two separate research reports. The purpose of the present report will be to interpret the results of the ten content areas and address the following questions:

- (1) How do the academically excellent groups differ from one another in reaction to each of the content areas?
- (2) How does the comparison group differ from the academically excellent groups?
- (3) What academic interests does the College seem to be meeting well for all groups?
- (4) What problems are students in all groups encountering?
- (5) What suggestions for improvement can be made based upon the results?

In addition, this report will present the demographic/background information of the students who participated in the survey. For information concerning the analysis of local options report, please contact the Office of Institutional Research, Miami-Dade Community College.

Method

The administration of Student Reactions to College (SRC) was conducted in late October of 1980. The questionnaire, which consisted of 170 machine readable items including the local options section, was mailed to a total of 1,415 students. Each student was identified as a member of one of the following groups:

1. The Scholar's Grant Group - This group consisted of all Scholar's Grant recipients whose initial enrollment occurred in the Fall Term of 1979. After earning at least 20 semester credits at Miami-Dade, these students had to return for the Fall Term of 1980 and still be a recipient of the Scholar's Grant;
2. The Phi Theta Kappa Group - These students were members of Phi Theta Kappa, an honor society which requires a GPA of 3.5 or better, whose initial enrollment also occurred in the Fall Term of 1979. This group returned for the Fall Term of 1980 with at least 20 semester credits earned. Recipients of the Scholar's Grant were excluded.
3. The Non-Affiliated Academically Excellent Group - This group consisted of students whose cumulative GPA was 3.0 or better with at least 20 semester credits earned. These students also started at Miami-Dade in the Fall Term of 1979 and returned for the Fall Term of 1980. They could not, however, be on a merit scholarship or be members of Phi Theta Kappa.

4. The Comparison Group - This group was defined as students whose cumulative GPA was between 2.0 and 2.5 and whose initial enrollment also occurred in the Fall Term of 1979. Having earned at least 20 semester credits, these students had to return for the Fall Term of 1980. It was necessary to select a random sample for only this group due to the large number of students meeting these criteria. Selection was accomplished by a computer program designed to produce a sample considered representative of the entire population.

Approximately two weeks after the initial mailing of the SRC, follow-up letters were sent to the non-respondents. Of those students who did receive the survey, responses were returned from 233 (69.9%) of the Scholar's Grant recipients, 71 (79.7%) of the Phi Theta Kappa honor society members, 444 (64.0%) of the students in the non-affiliated academically excellent group, and 173 (55.8%) of the students in the comparison group. These responses reflect over two-thirds (64.6%) of the students selected for the study. The completed surveys were machine processed by ETS which, in turn, provided Miami-Dade with a detailed report of the results. This report included not only frequency counts for those students selecting a particular response, but also summary data based on the proportion of favorable responses. While summary data were not available for the local option items, they are presented in this report for discussion and analysis.

The responses to the broad content items are presented in the following tables along with the background/demographic information for each group. In the data analysis, a chi-square contingency test was used

to determine statistically significant differences between the groups with the level of significance set at P .05.

Demographic/Background Information

The SRC provides demographic/background information on all respondents to the survey. These data include such variables as sex, age, ethnic group, employment status and major field of study. For the present study, background data were compiled for each of the comparison groups.

According to the data presented in Table 1, the survey indicated that for all respondents combined, 62% were female while 33% were male with 5% not responding to this item. Examination of these data revealed, however, that for the comparison group (GPA 2.00 - 2.50), only 51% were

Table 1

Respondents by Sex								
Sex	Groups							
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173		G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444		Phi Theta Kappa N=71		Scholars Grant N=233	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Male	71	41	167	36	11	15	58	25
Female	88	51	263	59	57	80	169	73
No Response	14	8	21	5	3	4	6	3

female and 41% were male with 8% not responding. The academically excellent groups consisted of much higher proportions of females with the Phi Theta Kappa respondents having the largest female population (80% female, 15% male, 4% non-responding). The Scholar's Grant group consisted of 73% females, 25% males, and only 3% not responding while students with GPA's between 3.00 - 4.00 consisted of 59% females and 36% males with 5% not responding. According to 1980-81 Closing Fall enrollment data (Research

Report (81-09), the total Miami-Dade student population consisted of 56.2% females and 43.8% males.

The ethnic group distribution of the respondents, as seen in Table 2 below, reflected some notable differences between the four comparison groups. For example, white non-Hispanics made up 56% of the Phi Theta Kappa respondents while only 35% of the comparison group (GPA 2.00 - 2.50)

Table 2
Respondents by Ethnic Category

Ethnic Category	Groups							
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173		G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444		Phi Theta Kappa N=71		Scholars Grant N=233	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
White Non-Hispanic	60	35	183	41	40	55	107	46
Black Non-Hispanic	19	11	29	7	1	1	8	3
Hispanic	71	41	156	35	21	29	102	43
Other	6	3	43	10	6	8	9	4
No Response	17	10	33	7	3	4	7	3

was identified as white non-Hispanic. Respondents from the other two groups, the Scholar's Grant recipients and students with GPA's between 3.00 - 4.00, were comprised of 56% and 41% white non-Hispanic respondents respectively. The Hispanic distribution was slightly disproportionate between groups ranging from 29% of the Phi Theta Kappas to 43% of the Scholar Grant recipients. For the two GPA comparison groups, 41% was Hispanic in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA category while 35% was Hispanic in the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA category. The greatest amount of difference was found in the proportions of black non-Hispanic respondents. The survey revealed that 11% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group was black non-Hispanic as was 7% of the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group.

In contrast, only 3% of the Scholar's Grant recipients and 1% of the Phi Theta Kappa Group was black non-Hispanic. Approximately 7% of all four study groups did not respond to this question.

In order to determine any significant differences between respondents and non-respondents, a chi square test was performed on the variables sex and ethnic. There were no ethnic differences between respondents and non-respondents for all groups combined. There was a difference for the variable sex with a higher proportion of females responding than males. However, there was no difference by group. That is, for all four groups, higher proportions of females responded than did males.

A significant difference was observed in the proportion of respondents and non-respondents by group. Almost three-fourths of the Scholar's Grant recipients and the Phi Theta Kappa students responded compared to only 55.8% of students in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group and 64.0% of students in the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group. This was not due to a difference between proportions of male and female respondents. An analysis of ethnic was performed for each group and only the Scholar's Grant group showed a significant difference. A higher percentage of white non-Hispanics and a lower percentage of Hispanics and black non-Hispanics responded in this group.

In summary, for all groups a higher proportion of females than males responded. Except for the Scholar's Grant group, the ethnicity of the respondents may be considered representative of the total population. For the Scholar's Grant group, however, white non-Hispanics tended to respond in a slightly higher proportion.

For each of the four groups, responses to the variable age revealed that the majority of students (82% or more) were 24 or under. As would be expected due to eligibility, 97% of the Scholar's Grant recipients reported being in this age bracket. The students' responses to the variable employment status indicate that approximately half were employed part-time while almost 15% were employed full-time. For each group, approximately 25% was unemployed, with the remainder not responding to the item. The only group reflecting some variation from the others was the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group. In this category, 39% of the respondents indicated they were unemployed.

The survey revealed that over three-fourths of the respondents usually took classes during the day. In fact, for the Phi Theta Kappa group, 90% of the students usually attended day-time classes. The largest proportion of respondents taking late afternoon or evening courses was reported for the two GPA groups, with 15% in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA category and 14% in the 3.00 - 4.00 category.

A significant difference was found in the number of credits the students were currently enrolled for at the College. Only 5% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group reported taking 15 credits or more compared to 24% of the Phi Theta Kappa group. However, the responses were quite similar for the 12-15 credits category, with between 53% and 59% of the respondents in all four groups enrolled for this number of credits.

The respondents were asked to indicate the level of degree to which their program usually leads. As might be expected, the Phi Theta

Kappa group reported the highest percentage (80%) of four-year or higher degrees, while the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group reported the least (58%). For the Scholar's Grant group, 69% chose this response as did 59% of the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group. The percentage of respondents reporting that their program usually leads to a two-year degree ranged from 10% of the Phi Theta Kappa group to 26% of the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group. Finally, the distribution of major fields of study revealed that the largest proportion of students in each group was majoring in business or health services while the greatest number of technology students were members of the Scholar's Grant group (11%).

Results

Instruction and classroom experience

The items presented in Table 3 dealt with the students' perception of how well their instructors have been functioning in class. Among those areas touched upon were the students' sense of having been challenged or bored and whether or not their instructors were up-to-date, fair and committed to helping students learn. While there was a good deal of similarity between many of the groups' responses, a number of items did reflect some interesting differences.

According to item 4, the average GPA group responded somewhat less favorably than the academically excellent students to the degree to which their instructors had geared courses to the students' interest and ability. Only 47% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group responded favorably to this item compared to between 58% and 63% of the academically excellent groups. Approximately 71% of all four groups responded favorably to Item 5 suggesting that only about 29% of the students felt that their instructors had been unable to explain something during the term. The group responding most favorably to the suggestion that instructors respected views other than their own was the Scholar's Grant group (80%). This compared to about 73% of the other groups and would not be considered significant.

The Scholar's Grant group reported the most favorable responses to item 7 which indicated that their instructors had presented more than just readings in class. Favorable responses for the other groups ranged from 58% to 66% compared to 74% of the Scholar's Grant group. All four

groups responded similarly to how well their instructors had listened to class discussions with approximately 84% responding favorably.

Table 3
Quality of Instruction

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term my instructors have:				
4) Geared courses to students instrst/abil.	47	62	58	63
5) Been unable to explain something to me	64	74	69	72
6) Respected student view diff. from theirs	71	74	73	80
7) Presented more in class than readings	59	66	58	74
8) Really listened to class discussion	79	84	83	85
9) Done little except put out the material	72	76	82	80
11) Treated all their students fairly	83	88	94	92
12) Been clear about what they expected	79	85	87	85
13) Piled on work as if its my only class	64	73	72	61
17) Taught over the heads of their students	86	88	97	90
During this term I have:				
44) Had assignments that were busywork	79	82	86	88
46) Had a class that just went over material	82	87	84	86
48) Felt frustrated over slow pace of class	87	89	88	89
120) Had a prof who was consist. unprepared	69	71	80	74
124) Had a dull course turn out interesting	66	60	63	67
125) Had an interesting course turn out dull	25	39	38	38
126) Had a course taught too much like H.S.	53	61	51	52

For items 9, 11, and 12, over three-fourths of the students combined responded favorably to the way they were treated by their instructors. However, almost a third of the students combined reported that their instructors had piled on work as if theirs was the only class. Very favorable responses were chosen by all groups for item 17, indicating that few instructors taught their courses over the heads of their students. The most favorable response came from the Phi Theta Kappas with 97%.

Surprisingly, the remaining items in this section revealed strikingly similar responses from all four groups. In fact, very few less than favorable responses were reported for such things as being assigned busy work, having a class that just went over material, being frustrated over the slow pace of a class, or having a course taught too much like high school. The least favorable response came from the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group for item 125 which revealed that 75% of this group had an interesting course turn out dull. This was true also for just over 60% of the academically excellent students.

The items in Table 4 dealt with the subject of student-centered instruction. The results from this section reflect the students' preferences for modes of instruction that place the primary responsibility for learning on the student rather than the instructor. While these items are concerned with such things as classroom organization and procedures, class size, and grading procedures, a common theme does exist in the source of control of the learning process.

The survey revealed that just under half of the students in each group felt that their instructors had allowed some freedom in doing assignments. However, when it came to allowing several students to work on the same assignment, the survey suggests that the academically excellent students had less opportunity to share their assignments with classmates than students in the average group. This finding might suggest a difference in the type of courses these students enroll in.

Table 4
Student-Centered Instruction

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholarship Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
This term my instructors have:				
14) Allowed some freedom in doing assignments	46	45	41	44
How do you feel about:				
56) Assign. that several students work on	65	50	39	48
57) At least one independent study course	50	52	53	42
60) Grades I can compare to those of others	41	51	45	56
61) Small classes once vs. larger ones often	32	33	31	36
64) Credit for passing exam only-no classes	48	60	67	67
69) No grades at all, just written comments	13	10	19	22
70) No texts or assign. Informal discussion	25	20	27	22

There was virtually no difference between groups in their responses to the items suggesting that they take at least one independent study course and that they be able to compare grades with others to see how well they did. Similarly, about one-third of all four groups responded favorably to the suggestion that small classes should meet once a week instead of large classes meeting more often. Responses to item 64 did reflect an interesting contrast between the academically excellent groups and the average students. In this case, less than half of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group favored the idea of getting course credit based on passing an exam without having to take the course compared to approximately 65% of the other groups.

Relatively few students from each group responded favorably to the last two items in this section. In item 69, only about 12% of the

students indicated that they would prefer to have just writer comments instead of grades. The most favorable response to this idea came from the Phi Theta Kappa group with 19%. The suggestion for having classes without texts or assignments and organized around informal discussions also received relatively few favorable votes. Only about 22% of each group indicated interest in this learning concept.

Form of instruction was the topic of the items presented in Table 5. These items were concerned with course objectives as they relate to

Table 5
Form of Instruction

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 3.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
18) Gone to course-related act. off Campus	24	33	45	36
122) Had course too slanted toward one job	66	77	82	78
123) Had course too slanted toward 4-Yr/Grad.	73	80	90	85
How do you feel about:				
58) Best & slower students taught separately	21	32	43	48
55) Experience in real job-even delay.Grad.	55	65	69	68
66) Class experiences in community	62	69	76	71
138) More courses & programs for community	39	52	55	46

preparation for a job or further education. Additionally, out-of-class experience was also considered by the respondents as well as the concept of separating students based on their academic ability.

For the most part, the items in this section revealed a significant difference between the academically excellent students and their

average GPA counterparts. According to item 18, the academically excellent students indicated that between 33% and 45% had gone to a course-related activity off-campus while only 24% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA groups responded similarly. For items 122 and 123, disagreement with the statements about course intent was the favorable response. Accordingly, the academically excellent students reported in both cases that fewer students had taken courses that were either too heavily slanted toward one job or too slanted toward a four year college or graduate school than did members of the average GPA group.

The organized scholarship groups responded most favorably to the suggestion that the best students and the slower students be taught in separate classes. Favorable responses for these groups (Phi Theta Kappa and Scholar's Grant) ranged from 43% to 48% compared to between 21% (2.00 - 2.50 GPA group) and 32% (3.00 - 4.00) GPA group. Obviously, a substantial number of these students tend to object to having to wait for all students to "catch up" before moving ahead.

Responses to item 65 indicated that academically excellent students are more willing to delay graduation for experience in a real job than are the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA students. However, over 60% of all four groups responded favorably to having class experiences out in the community or away from the college. Phi Theta Kappa students reported the most favorable responses to this item (76%). Finally, the academically excellent students were most supportive of the suggestion that the college offer more courses and programs for people in the community who are not regular students. Surprisingly, over half (51%) of all students surveyed did not favor this idea.

The subject of course grading practices and policies was covered by the items presented in Table 6. Responses to these items were intended to reflect student feelings about some rather unconventional methods of monitoring student progress. The actual responses suggest that in at least some cases academic success is related to student preference for certain grading procedures.

Table 6

Grading

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term my instructors have:				
15) Returned papers in time to be helpful	68	73	72	73
16) Put detailed comments on exams & papers	49	48	45	49
During this term I have:				
43) Known how I was doing before grades	56	76	76	82
How do you feel about:				
59) Base grades on daily work, not few exams	63	59	60	63
60) Grades I can compare to those of others	41	51	45	56
63) At least one course without grades	15	21	22	24
69) No grades at all, just written comments	13	10	19	12
The College should:				
139) Record only courses passed, no grades	31	11	9	7
140) Record grades in major field only	36	25	14	15
147) Let student drop courses without failing	62	53	59	49

The percentage of favorable responses from each group was very similar for both items 15 and 16. According to these responses, approximately 72% of the students surveyed indicated that their instructors had returned papers in time to be helpful and just under half of each group reported that detailed comments had been provided on exams and papers. However, item 43 revealed a significant difference between the average GPA group and the academically excellent students. For this item, over three-fourths of the academically excellent groups indicated that they knew how they were doing before grades came out compared to only 56% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA students.

One area that most students tended to be in agreement on was the suggestion that grades be based on daily work rather than just a few exams. Approximately 61% of the students were in favor of this idea according to responses to item 59. To a somewhat lesser degree of similarity, approximately 50% of the students favored the idea of being able to compare grades with others to see how well they did at the end of each term. Relatively few favorable responses were reported for each group to items 63 and 69 which suggested that students should have at least one course without grades or no grades at all. The lack of support for these ideas may well suggest that students do get reinforcement from grades awarded for completed coursework.

The most interesting findings in this section were reported for items 139, 140 and 147. In each case, there is a clear difference in responses between groups. To begin with, the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group was most clearly in favor in each of the three suggestions, i.e. recording only courses passed without grades, recording grades only for courses in one's major field, and letting students drop courses without failing. While all three of the academically excellent groups responded similarly (approximately 9%) to the suggestion that the college record only courses passed, the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group differed significantly from the organized scholarship groups with regard to item 140. In this case, 25% of the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group responded favorably to the notion of recording grades only for courses in the major field of study compared to about 45% of the Phi Theta Kappas and the Scholar's Grant group. Finally, the Scholar's Grant group was the only group to report less than 50% in favor of allowing students to drop courses without failing. Clearly, the academically excellent students find more value in grades than the average GPA students at Miami-Dade.

The six items shown in Table 7 dealt with the subject of academic performance. While the items tended to be general in content, they did reflect the students' perceptions of how well they were doing in class. It was this group of items which revealed some of the more glaring differences between the academically excellent students and their 2.00 - 2.50 GPA counterparts.

Table 7
Academic Performance

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 3.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
20) Done badly on a test	8	37	48	51
45) Been bored in class	63	70	77	70
47) Felt left behind in a class	83	90	94	94
In general:				
73) I am doing well in major field	58	83	88	90
How do you feel about:				
62) Keeping a class on schedule regardless of student progress	27	33	29	31

As might be expected, item 20 revealed that the group most often having done badly on a test (92%) was the average GPA group. This group was followed by the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA groups (63%) while about half of the organized scholarship groups responded similarly. Although items 45 and 47 received favorable responses for the most part, it was again the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA category reporting most often that they were either bored in class or felt left behind in class. The academically excellent students also reported doing significantly better in their major field of study than did the

average GPA group. Finally, only a third or less of each group favored the idea of keeping a class on schedule regardless of student progress. Surprisingly, the groups all responded very much alike to this item with favorable responses ranging from 27% to 22%.

Studying

The thirteen items in Table 8 reflect the types of problems students often describe having with regard to out-of-class studying. These items tend to measure a different aspect of performance than what is normally measured in the classroom. As seen in the table, there is a clear difference in the study habits between academically excellent students and the average students who participated in the study.

Table 8
Studying

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term my instructors have:				
10) Expect more outside work than had time	72	76	73	77
During this term I have:				
20) Done badly on a test	8	37	48	51
27) Taken time from one course to do another	19	28	17	27
49) Had trouble concentrating on my studying	69	79	79	81
50) Had so much reading didn't understand it	62	73	77	73
51) Been able to get help with my studies	33	46	58	57
52) Not understood what I was studying	66	85	93	89
55) Had to study so much no time to relax	67	65	60	63
121) Got so far behind I could not catch up	57	70	82	80
In General:				
79) I've not learned to study in time I have	31	61	73	74
92) I have had to learn math I should know	42	59	64	77
How do you feel about:				
127) I need someplace to study with others	36	36	40	40
128) I need someplace to study undisturbed	46	55	71	59

The most obvious differences between the groups are reflected in items in which the students reported their preparation for classroom activities. In this group of items, the students with GPA's between 2.00 - 2.50 clearly indicated that they had performed badly on a test in more cases than students belonging to the organized scholarship groups. These same students also reported having trouble concentrating on their studying as well as having too much reading that they did not understand. In contrast, the academically excellent students did not report having quite as much trouble in these areas. According to item 5, the organized scholarship groups reported that they were able to get help with their studies in more cases than students with GPA's between 2.00 and 2.50 and students in the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA category.

The responses to item 52 also revealed a clear difference between the groups surveyed. In this case, the academically excellent students reported that they understood what they were studying more often than students in the comparison group. Given this finding, it is interesting to note that little difference was reported between groups in item 55 which reflects the time used to relax from studies. This seemingly suggests that students in the 2.00 - 2.50 comparison group do not sacrifice relaxation for studies even when this may clearly be called for. In fact, item 121 reveals that the students in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group found themselves so far behind in studying that they could not catch up in significantly more cases than students in the academically excellent groups.

In all four groups, students reported at about the same rate that the instructors have expected more outside work from them than they had time to do. Item 127, which addressed the need to study with others, was also responded to similarly by all four groups. The Phi Theta Kappa group, however, reported most often that they were able to study undisturbed without needing a special area to work in. In general, the organized scholarship groups indicated that they had learned to study "in the time that they had" in more cases than students in the other two groups. Finally, item 92 revealed the relationship between having to learn math and one's academic standing in the college. According to these data, the Scholar's Grant students required the least amount of instruction in this area followed by the Phi Theta Kappa students, students in the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group, and finally the students in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA category. Clearly, the items in this content area reflect some revealing differences between the study groups.

Student Goals and Planning

Eight items dealt with the student's tendency to play an active role in the development of plans for future activities as they apply to what one may do upon completion of college. This often has to do with the type of courses a student enrolls in and the goals that are set prior to selecting an academic area. As seen in Table 9, the academically excellent students tended to be more certain of their future plans and activities than were students in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group.

Table 9
Planning

	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
In general:				
72) My courses are tied to future job plans	66	79	79	80
74) I know what I want to do when I finish	69	77	76	74
75) Some of my courses won't/didn't count	43	44	43	51
78) The College gives me what I want	67	71	75	75
94) I am not sure what I'm getting from College	60	73	81	70
95) I'd change my field if no delay in finish	63	76	71	73
103) Maybe what I'm taking isn't what I want	59	73	78	72
108) I have had trouble deciding on courses	78	85	87	87

Members of the three academically excellent groups responded very similarly to at least three items in this area. Essentially, the students indicated that their courses are tied to future job plans, that they know what they want when they are finished with college, and that they had no trouble deciding on which courses to take. In contrast, the "average" students were less sure of themselves in each of these areas. In two items, the Phi Theta Kappa students reported the most favorable responses with regard to what they are getting from college and that the courses they are taking are in fact what they want. The group reporting most often that they would change their field of study if there were no delay in finishing college was the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group. All groups reported at about the same rate that the college is providing what they want. Overall, it appears that the academically excellent students have seriously considered their future plans more often than the students in the average GPA group.

Counseling and Advising

Counseling and advising was the subject of the items presented in Table 10. According to the survey, differences between groups were found in two items. Both items measured the students' success in trying to meet with either a faculty adviser or counselor.

Table 10
Counseling and Advising

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
26) Talked with a counselor about my plans	67	63	61	71
30) Looked through literature about jobs	50	49	57	53
32) Tried unsuccessfully to meet fac.advisr.	71	85	80	85
38) Tried unsuccessfully to meet counselor	76	81	83	82

The percentage of favorable responses revealed that the academically excellent students tended to be more successful in their attempts to meet with either a faculty adviser or counselor than were students in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA category. Favorable responses were selected by between 80% and 85% of the academically excellent students compared to between 71% and 76% of the average students. In the case of the Phi Theta Kappa students and the Scholar's Grant students, these differences may be explained by their contact with their organization coordinators and the campus coordinators for Emphasis on Excellence. However, the difference between the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group and the average GPA group may just be the result of the academically excellent group's persistence in attempting

to make these contacts.

In general, all four groups reported approximately the same percentage of favorable responses with regard to having talked to a counselor about their plans. This was true for between 61% and 71% of all students surveyed. Additionally, very little difference was reported between groups with respect to looking through the literature about jobs. Surprisingly, only about one-half of all students surveyed reported spending any time researching this information.

Administrative Regulations

The items in Table 11 were concerned with how students view the extent to which college administration should exercise control over extra-curricular activities. In addition, the items dealt with student feelings which resulted from administrative actions. Overall, the Scholar's Grant recipients tended to be the most favorable respondents to this section of the survey.

Compared to approximately 60% of the other groups, the Scholar's Grant respondents indicated that 72% had not endured long senseless administrative procedures. This group also suffered the least inconvenience resulting from an administrative error and the least amount of anger from something the administration did. These findings suggest that members of the Scholar's Grant group may be receiving more personalized attention than those students in the other groups. This may, in fact, reflect their contact with and guidance from the campus Emphasis on Excellence coordinators.

Table 11
Administrative Procedures

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
24) Had to endure long senseless admin proc.	58	61	63	72
25) Gone all around trying to get information	40	46	37	48
28) Inconvenienced by an administ. error	68	70	66	79
41) Been kept from something by unneces reg.	71	77	73	78
42) Been angered by something adminis. did	62	66	58	74
In general:				
81) Regs. pretty relaxed here; no hassle	67	67	75	76

An interesting contrast between the organized scholarship groups and the two GPA groups was reported in item 81. Clearly, the organized scholarship students found college regulations more relaxed than students in the other groups. Favorable responses to this item came from approximately three-fourths of the Phi Theta Kappa students and Scholar's Grant recipients compared to just over two-thirds of the other students.

In the table entitled "Rules and Regulations", the students' responses to several items concerning the students' role in the decision-making process are presented. According to the survey, this area elicited less than favorable responses from all students. However, while most responses were unfavorable, there were, in fact, some differences reported between groups.

In general, all four groups indicated that student publications are too controlled by the administration. The organized scholarship groups

did, however, respond somewhat less harsh than members of the other groups. Similar responses were reported for item 84 with approximately 28% of all

Table 12
Rules and Regulations

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
In general:				
80) Student Publ. are too controlled by admn.	29	27	37	34
84) Rules made without student consultation	31	26	39	27
85) Students have role in use of student fees	23	12	13	9
109) Students here are treated as adults	71	71	74	77

groups indicating that rules are made at the college without student consultation. In this case, the most favorable responses came from the Phi Theta Kappa group (39%).

The most visible difference between groups in this section of the SRC was reflected in item 85. According to these data, almost one-fourth of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group felt that students did have a role in the use of student fees. In contrast, only between 9% and 13% of the other groups responded favorably to this item. The most favorable responses in this section were reported for item 109 which suggested that over 70% of each group felt that students at Miami-Dade are treated as adults.

Class Scheduling and Registration

The items in this section dealt with the frustrations experienced by students who know which courses they need to take, but are prevented because of administrative red tape or errors. For the most part, the students' responses to these items were very similar for all groups.

According to the data in Table 13, between 66% and 79% of the students in each group reported being inconvenienced by some form of administrative error. The students also reported that between 71% and 78% had been kept from taking something by unnecessary regulations. On the other

Table 13
Registration and Scheduling

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have been:				
28) Inconvenienced by an administ. error	68	70	66	79
41) Been kept from something by unneces. reg.	71	77	73	78
116) Trapped by rigid drop/add requirements	77	84	83	88
117) Kept from req. course by schedule probs.	68	71	68	67
118) Misses a needed course that wasn't avail.	66	68	70	74
In general:				
97) Registration procedures were a burden	41	41	43	56
99) Struggle to get started lasted too long	54	65	70	72
The College should:				
135) Reduce form filling by computerizing	34	42	44	47
142) Add days at start to work out programs	55	47	53	44
143) Let students take classes even if huge	17	15	12	11
150) Retain the present academic calendar	54	61	65	65

hand, only about one-fifth of the students in each group indicated that they had been trapped by rigid drop and add requirements during the term.

While approximately 30% of the respondents had missed a needed course that wasn't available during the term, between 29% and 33% revealed that they had been kept from required courses because of scheduling problems.

Members of the Scholar's Grant group found registration procedures less burdensome than the other groups, with 56% responding favorably compared to between 41% and 43% of the other groups. The academically excellent students responded most favorably to item 99 which dealt with the struggle to get started. Accordingly, almost half of the average students found that the struggle lasted too long compared to between 28% and 35% of the academically excellent groups.

Clearly, the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA students responded less favorably than the academically excellent students to the suggestion that the college should cut down the time students spend filling out forms by computerizing the routine administrative work. However, students from all four groups responded similarly (between 44% and 55%) to item 142 which suggested that the college should add days at the start of the term to work out programs. Although the average group was most in favor of allowing students to take classes even if the class size was high, this was only true for between 11% and 17% of all the students. Finally, the academically excellent students preferred to retain the present academic calendar in more cases than the students in the GPA 2.00 - 2.50 category. While it is clear that a sizeable portion of students from each group did favor altering the academic calendar, the survey did not suggest any alternatives.

Overall, very little difference was reported between groups for the items in this section. This would presumably suggest that the process of registration and scheduling generally appears to be affecting students in all academic categories equally.

Another group of items related to class scheduling and registration is presented in Table 14. These items, for the most part, addressed the problems associated with course requirements and whether or not students were permitted to enroll in the courses of their choice.

Table 14
Programming

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
113) Dropped a course that wasn't what I want	68	73	76	76
114) Been kept from a course because of req.	84	87	93	96
115) Had to take course below what I wanted	88	84	89	88
119) Taken a req. course that was a waste	43	56	59	53
In general:				
77) I know enough about 4yr/grad requirements	22	21	19	19
98) I got the courses I wanted	73	80	82	86
100) Req. courses in major kept me from other	38	45	34	41
The College should:				
141) Let students take any course regardless	43	50	48	46
147) Let student drop courses without failing	62	53	59	49

As seen in the table, the Phi Theta Kappa group reported that only 56% had not been given wrong information by a staff member during the term. This was in contrast to approximately 70% of the students in the

remaining groups. Of course, this may reflect a difference between groups in the amount of information sought by respective members and not necessarily a deficiency on the part of college personnel.

While only about 14% of each group reported having to take a course below what was wanted, just under half of the academically excellent students indicated that they had taken a required course that was a waste of time. The 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group responded even less favorably with 57%. The survey also revealed that at least 80% of the academically excellent groups had taken the courses they wanted compared to 73% of the average group. Responses to the remaining items in this table suggested little difference between groups with respect to letting students take any courses they wish regardless of preparation and allowing students to drop courses without failing.

Organized Student Activities

In table 15, the students' responses are shown for a number of items dealing with the type of organized student activities which are available on Miami-Dade campuses. Item 34 reflected a good deal of difference between the Phi Theta Kappa students and members of the other groups with regard to having attended a meeting of a college activity during the current term. In fact, over 75% of the students in the Phi Theta Kappa group indicated that they had participated in a college activity compared to only between 31% and 44% of the other three groups. Presumably, the students in this group are citing their association with the Phi Theta Kappa honor society and its regular meetings.

The data also revealed that only about 25% of the students in each group reported that the student government organization effectively

Table 15
Organized Student Activities

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
34) Gone to a meeting of a college activity	31	40	76	44
In general:				
111) Student Govt. effectively represents me	27	25	27	24
How do you feel about:				
68) Cultural events on campus-art theater	82	88	94	85
71) Activities for married or older student	35	49	58	47
The College should:				
136) End compulsory student fees for activity	30	24	24	24
149) Leave control of nonclass activ. to stud.	56	58	63	58

represents them at the college. Additionally, very little difference is seen in the students' responses to how they felt about cultural events on campus. In fact, between 82% and 94% of the students responded favorably to these activities. The students were also asked if they favored activities for married or older students in item 71. As seen in the table, in most cases less than half of the students favored these activities.

Favorable responses from the academically excellent students were identical for item 136 which stated that the college would end compulsory student fees for certain types of activities. While less than one-fourth of the academically excellent students favored this action, 30% of the

students in the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group responded favorably. All groups responded very similarly to item 149 which suggested that the college leave control of non-classroom activities to the students. Students responding favorably to this suggestion ranged from 56% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA range to 63% of the Phi Theta Kappa group. In general, the responses to these items suggest that with the exception of the Phi Theta Kappa group, students generally do not participate in formal college activities but are very much in favor of cultural events held on campus

Living

The section on living consisted of three groups of items; help with living problems, financially related problems, and campus climate. The data from these items are presented in the following tables and illustrate the type of problems faced by most college students.

The table of items dealing with financially related problems suggests that all groups experience the same economic difficulties with the Scholar's Grant recipients to a slightly lesser degree. For example, less than 10% of the Scholar's Grant groups thought about dropping out of school because of money problems compared to approximately 23% of the respondents from the other groups. The Scholar's Grant group also reported the least number of difficulties regarding the cost of books and supplies and getting to and from campus. In general, about the same percentage of students from each group indicated that they had bought a textbook that wasn't necessary, that food services were adequate, and that they felt cut off from the campus where they live.

Table 16
Financial and Related Problems

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
22) Had to buy a textbook that wasn't necess.	42	53	52	44
40) Thought about dropping out; money probs.	76	77	77	92
54) Had problems getting to and from campus	86	88	91	95
In general I feel:				
89) Food services here are adequate for me	61	53	66	62
90) Had problems getting acceptable housing	76	72	75	78
91) Cut off from the campus where I live	62	56	69	63
102) Costs of books/supplies have been probs.	32	30	35	41

In the table entitled "Help with Living Problems", the data again revealed some interesting differences between the Scholar's Grant group and the other respondents. These data seem to reflect a close relationship between students in this group and the campus coordinators for Emphasis on Excellence.

As seen in item 35, the Scholar's Grant group faced few problems with no help from anyone at the college. At least 20% of the other respondents indicated that they were faced with that situation. The Scholar's Grant group also responded most favorably to the college's efforts to hire students for jobs (item 93). Virtually identical responses were reported by all groups for item 67 which suggested that approximately 55% felt that the college needed a student run office for advice on problems. While a small percentage of students suggested a need for day care facilities on or near campus, the actual numbers that this represents may be considered significant.

From item 134, it may be concluded that the organized scholarship groups would like to see the college stock more texts in the Library for rental. Approximately 51% of all groups felt that the college should use

Table 17
Help with Living Problems

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
35) Faced a prob. with no help from college	77	80	80	88
In general:				
93) College tries to hire students for jobs	37	38	36	45
How do you feel about:				
67) Student-run office for advice on probs.	56	54	55	56
130) I need a child care center on/near camp	4	7	5	1
131) I need a locker on campus--don't have now	35	41	41	43
The College should:				
134) Stock more texts in library for rental	55	57	70	66
137) Use more part-time help so hire student	46	52	55	53

more part time help as a way to provide jobs for students. Finally, item 131 suggests that about 41% of all respondents would like to have a locker on campus.

The items in Table 18 addressed the general campus climate at Miami-Dade and revealed some very interesting findings. While approximately 27% of all groups reported that only a handful of students run things at the college, responses to the subsequent items were more varied. Thirty-nine percent of the Phi Theta Kappa group reported that students care about more than just getting through compared to between 25% and 31% of the other groups. Similarly, 52% of the Phi Theta Kappa group felt that the campus had more to offer than just classes compared to approximately 48% of the

other respondents. The most favorable response in this section was reported by the Phi Theta Kappa group and indicated that 89% found the campus friendly and comfortable. This compared to only about 77% of the other groups surveyed.

Table 18
Campus Climate

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
In general:				
86) A handful of students run things here	22	28	28	29
87) Stud. here only care about getting thru	25	26	39	31
88) Campus here only for class, nothing else	48	44	62	51
96) This College is friendly & comfortable	74	77	89	81
107) Anything I put down might be stolen	33	31	30	33
110) Info about whats going on easy to get	56	58	58	58
112) I feel unsafe on the campus after dark	59	57	51	45

Item 107 addressed the problem of theft on campus with about 32% of all groups suggesting that anything put down may be stolen. Another item with very similar responses between groups revealed that approximately 58% found information about college activities easy to get. The group feeling least safe on campus after dark was the Scholar's Grant group which may be attributed to their general age bracket being the youngest of all four groups. Nevertheless, this item did reveal a potential need for increased security efforts on campus.

Faculty Contact

The central theme of the items presented in Table 19 dealt with the availability of faculty and the extent to which they were responsive to student needs. Essentially, this section reflects the students' perceptions or feelings about their instructors.

Table 19
Instructor Accessibility

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term my instructors have:				
1) Been avail. outside class at good times	61	68	66	74
2) Been easy to talk to	63	76	82	81
3) Had trouble understanding studnt. probs.	88	90	96	93
During this term I have:				
36) Felt faculty/staff did not understand	65	65	65	66
53) Felt lack of sensitivity of fac/staff	81	84	89	91
In general:				
106) It is hard to get concerns known here	21	25	32	23

The data indicate that for all groups, over 60% of the students felt that instructors have been available outside of class at good times. The Scholar's Grant group reported the most favorable responses to this item (74%). Of course, the difference between groups may be partially attributed to the student/faculty relationships inherent in the special programs. This would certainly be very true for the Scholar's Grant students who have been monitored very closely by the coordinators of Emphasis on Excellence.

According to the survey, the academically excellent students in general felt that their instructors had been easy to talk to with favorable ratings between 76% and 82% compared to only 63% of the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group. Little difference was found between groups in their rating of the instructor's ability to understand student problems. All groups also responded similarly to the item concerned with faculty/staff not understanding what they were saying. However, in this case, approximately 35% of all groups responded unfavorably. Finally, the average GFA students responded least favorably to item 106 which stated that in general, it is hard to get concerns known here at the college. This was also true for the academically excellent students to a lesser degree, with the Phi Theta Kappa group responding most favorably to this item.

Table 20 shows how the students rated the extent to which they were involved with faculty outside of class. It is interesting to note that in almost every case, the Phi Theta Kappa group responded most favorably to the items in the section. Presumably, Phi Theta Kappa meetings would tend to account for some of the following findings.

The data revealed that while between 56% and 66% of the other groups reported having talked to a professor outside of class regarding a course, 75% of the Phi Theta Kappa group reported having this type of contact. A similar situation was reported for the item regarding help received from a professor outside of class. In this case, 48% of the Phi Theta Kappa students responded favorably compared to between 30% and 43% of the students in the other groups. Another interesting finding was revealed in the responses to item 25 which dealt with the amount of time

Table 20
Involvement with Faculty

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have:				
19) Talked to prof. outside class, re: course	56	58	75	66
21) Got course help from prof. outside class	30	36	48	43
25) Gone all around trying to get information	40	46	37	48
29) Talked to prof. about non-class things	38	51	68	59
34) Gone to a meeting of a college activity	31	40	76	44
36) Felt faculty/staff did not understand	65	65	65	66
37) Got help from fac/staff for a problem	41	41	48	41
53) Felt lack of sensitivity of fac/staff	81	84	89	91

spent trying to get information. As seen in the table, only 37% of the Phi Theta Kappa group responded favorably to this item compared to between 40% and 48% of the other groups. This may suggest, however, that Phi Theta Kappa students have sought more information than members of the other groups.

Library/Bookstore

In this section, the students surveyed were asked to express their satisfaction with both library and bookstore services at Miami-Dade. In general, little difference was reflected in the responses for all four groups. As seen in Table 21, between 80% and 84% of the respondents expressed that they were well satisfied with library services. In addition, over three-fourths of all respondents indicated that they were able to use the library whenever they needed to. The students also responded quite favorably to the bookstore services offered on campus.

Table 21
Library/Bookstore

Items	Groups			
	G.P.A. 2.00- 2.50 N=173	G.P.A. 3.00- 4.00 N=444	Phi Theta Kappa N=71	Scholars Grant N=233
	%	%	%	%
(All figures below are % responding favorably)				
During this term I have been:				
23) Unable to use library when needed-closed	83	82	77	82
In general I have been:				
104) Well satisfied with library services	84	81	80	84
105) Well Satisfied with bookstore services	74	71	73	78
The College should:				
133) Limit more books to one-day circulation	19	16	6	11
134) Stock more texts in library for rental	55	57	70	66

A relatively small percentage of students responded favorably to the item suggesting that the college should limit more books to one day circulation. Approximately 61% of all respondents disagreed with the statement that the college should stock more texts in the library for rental. Note that disagreement with this statement was the item's favorable response. Overall, students seem to be satisfied with the extent of the services provided by both the bookstore and the library regardless of academic performance.

SUMMARY

In summary, the Student Reaction to College survey was conducted to determine how well Miami-Dade was meeting the needs of its academically excellent students. Primary objectives of the survey included answering such questions as how do the academically excellent students differ from one another, how do the average GPA students differ from the academically excellent groups, and what academic interests are being met well for all groups. In addition, the survey was intended to identify problems encountered by all students as well as provide data to support recommendations for improvement.

As discussed in the section on instruction and classroom experience, the survey revealed that the academically excellent students felt that instructors had geared courses to student interest and ability in more cases than the average GPA students. The survey also revealed that all groups felt that instructors listened carefully to class discussions and that most students felt they were treated fairly by their instructors. Surprisingly, most students also reported having an interesting course turn out dull. This finding would tend to suggest that instructors should consider revising course materials and presentation format.

Data also reported in this section suggested that fewer average GPA students favored the idea of credit by exam than did the academically excellent students. The organized scholarship groups (Phi Theta Kappa and Scholar's Grant recipients) tended to favor the suggestion that the best and slower students be separated into different classes. Interestingly

enough, all groups favored the idea of basing grades on daily work rather than just a few exams. This suggestion may, in fact, be worth consideration in at least some unique course settings.

An examination of the findings also revealed that academically excellent students tend to value grades more than average GPA students. This would seem to be consistent with the finding that almost all of the average GPA students had done badly on a test during the term compared to approximately two-thirds of the 3.00 - 4.00 GPA group and about one-half of the organized scholarship students.

In the studying content area, the SRC revealed that there was a clear difference in the study habits of the academically excellent students and the 2.00 - 2.50 GPA group. The survey showed that average GPA students have problems concentrating on studying and find that they have too much reading that they don't understand. However, little difference between groups was found regarding the time spent relaxing from studies, although the average students did tend to find themselves left behind more often than members of the academically excellent groups.

One problem commonly reported by all groups was that instructors often expected more work than the students had time for. This finding would suggest that instructors should probably review their assignments from time to time to determine if there may be time constraint problems for most students. Instructors may also want to consider reviewing study habits with their students as an attempt to offer meaningful solutions to some of their students' studying problems.

Data reported in the student goals and planning section revealed that academically excellent students tended to be more certain of their future plans and activities while approximately the same percentage of students from all four groups indicated that Miami-Dade was providing exactly what they wanted. The survey also showed that the academically excellent students were most successful in their attempts to meet with a faculty adviser or counselor. This finding may suggest a need for advisers and counselors to be more accessible to all Miami-Dade students and, in particular, to those students who may be having academic difficulties.

Overall, the Scholar's Grant recipients responded most favorably to the items dealing with administrative regulations suggesting that these students may be receiving the most personalized attention. The organized scholarship groups reportedly found the college regulations more relaxed than members of the other study groups. The problem reported equally by all four groups concerned the rules made without student consultation and the seemingly strict control over student publications by the administration. This finding may warrant a review of administrative involvement in these particular areas.

In the section regarding class scheduling and registration, it was found that over two-thirds of each group had been inconvenienced by an administrative error. It was also reported that approximately three-fourths of all students were kept from taking a course because of unnecessary regulations. It would seem that a process for identifying these problems as they occur would be called for. Certainly, at least some of these reported problems could have been resolved if such a system existed.

A number of items addressed the subject of organized student activities. According to the survey, the Phi Theta Kappa students were most often involved in college activities. However, few students from each group felt that the student government organization was effectively representing them. From this finding, it may be concluded that a re-evaluation of student government is called for. A survey of student interests and needs as they relate to this area may provide some new direction for this organization.

A section on living revealed that all groups were experiencing similar economic difficulties and that just over one-half of all students surveyed felt the college needed a student-run office for advice on problems. Interestingly enough, over three-fourths of each group reportedly found the Miami-Dade campuses to be friendly and comfortable. However, a concern about safety on the part of many students in each group seems to call for the possibility of upgraded security procedures.

The last two sections of the SRC dealt with faculty contact and the library and bookstore. Responses to these items indicated that approximately two-thirds of all students felt that instructors were available outside of class at good times, that the Phi Theta Kappa students had the most contact with their professors outside of class, and that most students from each group were quite satisfied with the extent of services provided by the bookstore and library.

In conclusion, the SRC results revealed that while, in many cases, there were significant differences between the study groups, there were also many items which produced strikingly similar responses from all

four academically defined categories. The overall findings do suggest that Miami-Dade is meeting the needs of all students regardless of academic performance. Hopefully, through some of the suggestions offered, the College will perhaps enhance the academic experience of every student at Miami-Dade.

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